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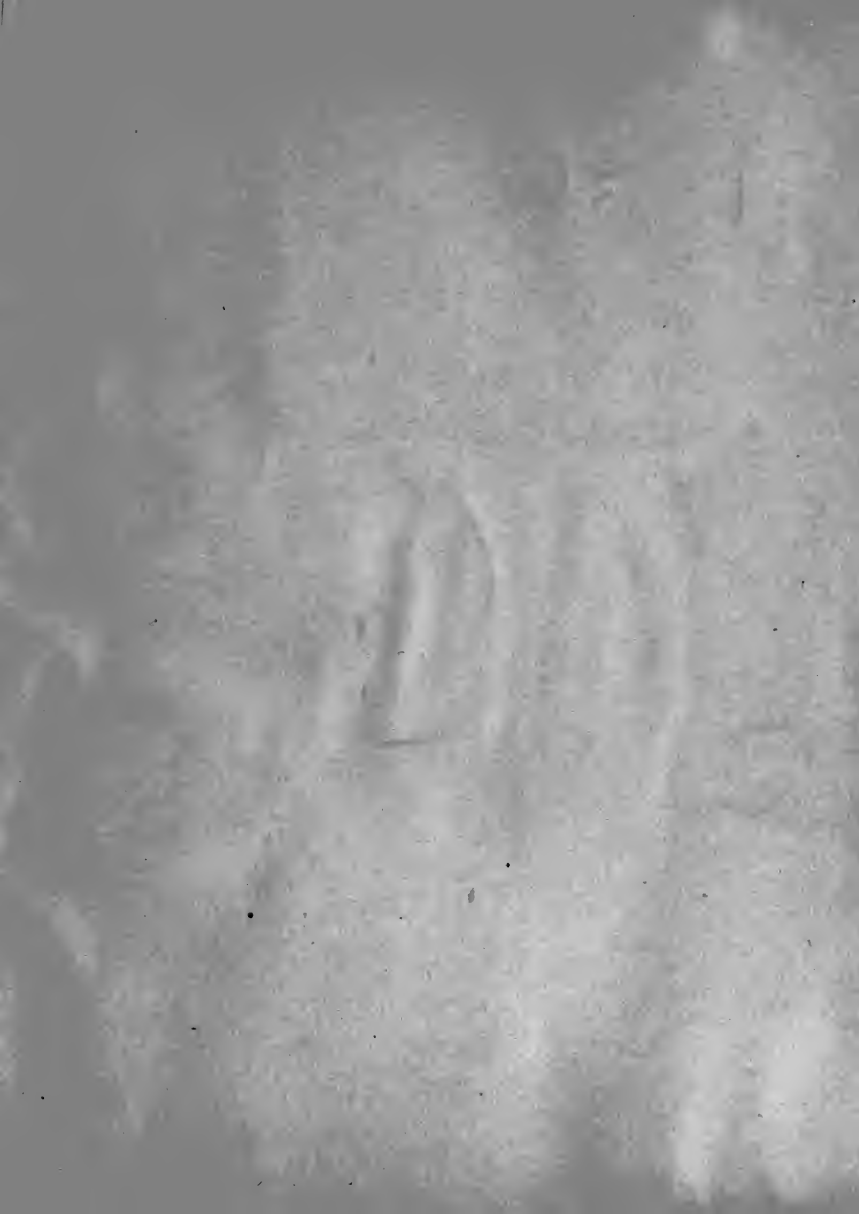
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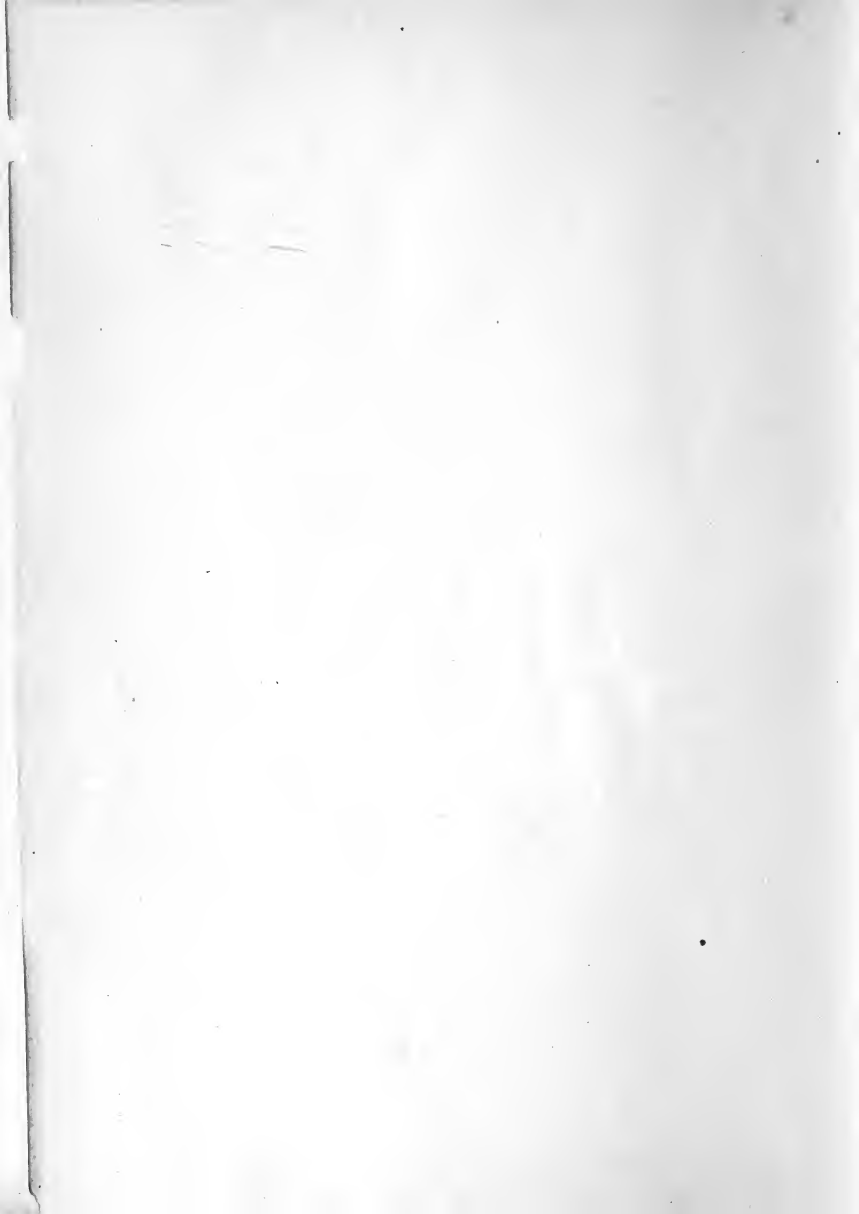
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# THE PRINCE'S WOOING.

A Dramatic Poem.

BY  
LOUISE MALLOY.

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# THE PRINCE'S WOOING.

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SCENE. *The garden of a mediæval castle. Beatrice is standing, her hands full of flowers, looking up.*

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*Beatrice*—Sweet birds, sing softly, for my captive ear  
Finds only mourning in your merry songs.  
Ah, would I had your wings to fly away  
Far from these walls, to love and liberty!  
No iron galls my delicate, soft hands,  
Yet is it tightened more around my heart;  
And all these sweet airs, heavy with perfume,  
Choke my free breath;—each blooming, royal rose  
To me is but a link of my hard chain.  
I fear the savage king who holds me thrall,  
And pity as myself his poor, crushed queen,  
Who gives no kind word, yet no harsh, to me.  
Poor lady! all her sympathies are dead,  
Or frozen into fears. What roots are these.

For her, the sweetest flower that ever bloomed,  
The fair Yolande,—more royal in her charms  
Than in her birth. Ah, dearly do I love  
The princely maid who seeks to cheer my gloom,  
And sets me as a sister in her heart.

But hers, alas! is not the love I crave,  
And which I wildly long, and madly pray—  
And losing which, I die! Yet I am here!

*(Drops flowers and weeps.)*

*(Enter the Princess Yolande.)*

Yolande—Thou, Beatrice, in tears! Why weepest,  
sweet?

Beatrice—For that, sweet Princess, which thou canst  
not give.

My liberty.

Yolande— Art so unhappy here?

Beatrice—Can I be happy, far from all I love?

Yolande—Do I not love thee with a sister's love,  
And share my state most faithfully with thee?

Come, Beatrice, this is a peevish mood.

Thou hast no lack of liberty,—thy home  
Holds no distracted parents, mourning thee,  
Nor has it all the luxury of this,

As thou hast told me. Why, then, such deep grief?  
Come, smile and laugh again, thou silly girl.

*Beatrice*—It is not only parents claim our love.

*Yolande*—Why dost thou turn away? Ha, sweet,  
thy cheek

But now so pale, is red as yonder rose.

What dost thou mean? Who love us more than  
they?

*Beatrice*—I dare not answer, Princess, for I know  
That thou dost laugh to scorn, the name of love.

*Yolande*—'Tis that, then! Art in love, thou pretty  
fool?

*Beatrice*—A folly, lady, thou wilt some day share.

*Yolande*—Ha! I in love! (*Laughing.*) O Beatrice,  
thy wit

Has gone to hunt thy wisdom. I in love!

*Beatrice*—It is a woman's destiny to love,  
And thou, a woman with an untried heart,  
Dost laugh at fate, as children play with life.  
Both plays will soon be earnest.

*Yolande*—Prophetess,  
When will the Moon-Man come down from the sky  
To woo me?

*Beatrice*-- When thine own heart finds its lord,  
Then wilt thou know if love is such a jest.

*Yolande*--My heart obeys a lord--mine own strong  
will.

*Beatrice*--As yonder river doth obey its bounds  
Until the tempests roar.

*Yolande*--(laughing.) Sweet, thou canst talk.

*Beatrice*--I talk of what I know. Thy lonely life,  
And thy stern father's will, have hid from thee  
The truth of life--that love is lord of all.

*Yolande*--And thou art sick for it, so thou art sad.  
Well, hear me, Beatrice ; dost know this day,  
This balmy, sunny day's my birthday, too?  
And I shall choose a boon, my father says :

I knew not what to ask, but now I do ;  
I'll beg thy liberty, and thou shalt go,  
Though sorely shall I miss thee, Beatrice.

*Beatrice*--O generous Princess ! half my freedom's joy  
Will melt to sorrow when I part from thee.

*Yolande*--(lightly.) Well, we'll keep sorrow till the  
parting comes,

And spend the hours meanwhile in pleasure. Come,

Sing some gay songs to me, my singing bird,  
That soon will fly away.

*Beatrice*— I'll sing a song  
That oft in my own home is sung to maids,  
Who vow, like thee, sweet lady, ne'er to love.

(*She sings :*)

"A little maid with tender eyes,  
Sang, 'Come not, Love, to woo me.  
Thy greatest art my heart defies;  
In vain thou wouldst pursue me!"  
O silly maid, so unafraid!  
Love only laughed; he knew his craft  
Could easily make her drain his draught,  
Like any other maiden.  
O silly little maiden!

In some sweet pain he dipped his dart,  
And mixed that pain with rapture;  
Then taking aim right at her heart,  
He--made another capture!  
O maidens fair, who love forswear,  
Take care,--beware--of Cupid's snare:  
Else in a thrice he'll have you there,  
Just like this little maiden,--  
This silly little maiden!"

*Yolande*—A silly maid, indeed, to yield so soon.  
A silly song.

*Beatrice*— Thy wisdom finds it so.

*Yolande*—Nay, hear me, *Beatrice*. Not of myself  
Was born the wisdom that doth rule my mind;  
For when a budding girl, I dreamed of love  
In all the tales I heard of chivalry,  
I asked my father, (stern thou deemest him,  
Yet never stern to me,) what was this love  
That in these tales held such a potent sway,  
And made a hero of each simple knight.  
He frowned at first, and cried, "I much mislike  
That thou shouldst listen to such silly tales;  
See thou do so no more." Then kissed away  
The tears that started at his sharp rebuke,  
And gentler said, "Sweet daughter, love's a ban,  
And not a blessing. 'Tis ambition's foe,  
And drags a conqueror down to be a slave.  
It steals a brave, keen spirit's force away  
To rust in slothful bliss. It is the bane  
Of noble enterprise;—the thirst for fame  
That prompts heroic deeds—the scorn of life  
That fills great souls—the stern unflinching will  
That masters nations—these can never move  
The slave of love, who deems his highest bliss

To loll through life, a thing of lazy dreams.  
Bend not thy proud neck to its heavy yoke,  
My lion-hearted girl;—thou art a queen  
By right of birth:—let other women love,  
But thou rule royally where others serve,  
Sole monarch of thyself. Wouldst thou be great,  
Wed power, but have thou naught to do with love.”  
• *Beatrice*—And was it thus thy woman’s heart was  
trained?

*Yolande*—Not wholly thus for thinking on his words,  
But yet unsatisfied, I asked the Queen,  
“Sweet mother, what is love?” She started so,  
Then kissed me, ah, so tenderly and close,  
But sighed in saying, “Love, my sweet Yolande!  
It is the last, worst tyranny of earth,  
The curse and torture of a woman’s life.  
It is the death of every joy,—the birth  
Of every sorrow;—’tis a cloud that hangs  
Forevermore upon the heart that loves,  
And dims the glorious sunlight. On its shrine  
Must die sweet friendships, cherished hopes and aims,  
Youth’s brightest dreams,—and from their ashes rise  
Sharp passion’s pains, and jealousy’s keen pangs,

And sorrows we have never known before.  
It is a thief that snatches all away,  
And leaves us nothing ; 'tis the deadly foe  
Of happiness and peace. Ah, sweet my child,  
Wouldst thou be happy, have thou naught of love!"  
Oh, I had scorned it when my father spoke,  
But when I saw my mother's wasted cheek  
Wet with hot tears, and heard her trembling voice  
Weak with unuttered woe, then, Beatrice,  
I feared it.

*Beatrice*— Marvellous if thou didst not,  
With such a teaching.

*Yolande*— I'll be free of it,  
For happiness and power both I crave.  
But come,—let lighter discourse charm us now.  
We'll lie here in the cool, fresh grass, with flowers  
To tend our languid state instead of maids,  
And thou shalt tell me sweet and wondrous tales.  
(*Suddenly.*) Ha, Beatrice, look yonder in the court!  
Dost see the stranger 'mong the crowding squires?  
They lead him onward to the castle gates.  
Who can he be? He seems of low degree,



And yet his bearing might befit a knight.

Dost see him?

*Beatrice—(in constrained voice.)* Yes.

*Yolande—(turning and looking at her in surprise.)*

Why, thou art pale as death!

Dost know this stranger? Is his coming ill?

*Beatrice—(trying to laugh.)*

Thy fancy, Princess, runs before thy wit.

I did not even see the stranger's face.

A pilgrim, likely.

*Yolande—(eagerly.)* \* From the Holy Land?

Dost think 'tis so? Nay, we will see him, then.

*Beatrice—(aside.)* Sweet Mother! he is mad!

*Yolande—(calling.)* Come hither, boy.

*(Enter Page.)*

Who is the stranger that hath entered here?

*Page—*A troubadour, my Princess, just returned  
From Palestine,—Our Lady's pilgrim, he.

*Yolande—*Oh, we must see him! Bid him here to us.

Now shall we have some tales of rare delight,

And sweetest minstrelsy. I love their songs

Of knightly deeds and martial enterprise,

Of heroes bold and ladies fair—of feats

Done in the older days of chivalry,  
Beyond compare in these,—I love them all.

*Beatrice*—(*aside.*) Oh, how her chatter strikes my  
tortured heart!

*Yolande*—I do believe thou hast no interest  
In this gay pilgrim. Rouse thee, *Beatrice*,  
And he shall sing thee love-songs an thou wilt.  
See, he is coming!

*Beatrice*— Does he come for me?  
Ah, dared I hope so!—no, the thought is wild.

(*Enter Troubadour.*)

*Yolande*—Welcome, Sir Troubadour; we sent for thee,  
That thou mayest grace us with thy melodies,  
And tales of thy adventurous pilgrimage.

*Troubadour*—Thy wishes, Princess, gladly I obey.

*Yolande*—Shame on thy thoughtlessness! I did forget  
Thou art Our Lady's pilgrim. I myself  
Will serve thee. Prithee, wait awhile.

*Troubadour*—Nay, thou a Princess, wait upon thy  
slave!

*Yolande*—'Tis true I am the daughter of a king,  
But She thou servest is my Queen. 'Tis meet  
That I so honor her. (*Exit Yolande.*)

*Beatrice*— My lord, the Prince !

*Prince*—(*starting.*) Thou, Lady Beatrice ! What  
dost *thou* here ?

*Beatrice*—(*aside.*) He did not see me, even ! (*Aloud.*)

I am here, my lord,

A captive taken by a sad mischance,  
And brought by this wild king, our deadly foe,  
To wait upon the Princess.

*Prince*— Thou art, then,  
*Her* captive ? Oh, how I do envy thee !

*Beatrice*—What dost thou envy me !

*Prince*— The sight of her,—  
The daily worship of her radiant face.

Sweet thralldom ! sweeter far than liberty—  
Would I might share it !

*Beatrice*— Thou hast every chance.

Prince, art thou mad ?

*Prince*— Yes, I am mad for her !  
Thou knowest, lady, in my father's court  
I heard reports of her rare loveliness,  
And on my heart, untouched by woman's love,  
Her praises fell, with strange yet sweetest force,  
Until I longed to satisfy my eyes

Of that great beauty all the poets sang.  
Our fathers were long foes,—advantage gained  
And held in battle, had well earned his hate,  
Her fierce, ambitious father,—so I knew  
In secret only might I see her face.  
In beggar's rags, with visage old and worn,  
I found a chance to beg her charity.  
Sweet saint! the alms she gave me, I wear yet  
Upon my heart. I saw her, and I loved,  
Yes, loved that instant with the strength of years,  
I loved with a love that sprang like Jove's great  
child,

In one sweet moment to its perfect height,  
And so I love her still. I could not rest  
For thinking of her;—life grew dark and dull,  
Away from her, the sunlight of my soul,  
Until my mighty yearning drove me here,  
Disdaining death and danger, to her feet.  
*Beatrice—(aside.)* This, this to me!—and *my* heart  
must be dumb!

*Prince*—I cry thy pardon, Lady Beatrice,  
Yet thou who knowest so well my lady's worth,  
Wilt surely not condemn a lover's warmth.

We did not know of thy captivity,  
Else hadst thou soon been rescued. Trust to me.

*Beatrice*—The Princess hath obtained my liberty.  
To-day I leave her. Come, Prince, come with me,  
Or this mad venture may yet cost thy life.  
If fierce King Ehole suspects thee here,

That moment thou art lost. Come, fly at once.

*Prince*—Nay, I must see the Princess.

*Beatrice*— Sweet my lord,  
Thou seekest danger. I implore thee, come.

*Prince*—Not till I see the Princess.

*Beatrice*— To what end?

In vain thou lovest her,—she scorns all love.

*Prince*—Ah, she hath never known it. Sweet the task  
To teach it to her.

*Beatrice*— She's her father's child.

And he hath crushed the power of loving in her.

She will not bear the slightest sound of love,

She scorns it—hates it—fears it. Woo a maid,

But she's a queen—a goddess!—woman, no!

*Prince*—Her face is woman's, though, as I'm a man;

And if her heart be not a woman's, too,

I'll soon discover. Soft, the Princess comes.

(*Enter Yolande.*)

*Beatrice*—How his eyes drink the beauty of her face!  
O cruel beauty! thou art death to me.

*Volande*—Here's cheering wine. Nay, Sir, I hold  
the cup.

*Prince*—'Tis nectar of the gods!

*Volande*—(*smiling.*) A pagan speech,  
And most unpilgrim-like. There are no gods.

*Prince*—But there are Hebes. Princess, pardon me;  
I am a troubadour—thou knowest our trade  
Deals with soft speeches; graver words come slow  
To lips so used to ladies' lovely looks,  
And knights' high deeds.

*Princess*— I fear 'tis even so.  
Then let thy speech resume the troubadour,  
And sing some songs of chivalry to us.

(*Prince sings:—*)

“When love is blessed with love again,  
And keenest raptures thrill the soul,  
When hands are clasped, no might of men  
Can ever force that clasp's control,—  
Ah, in that Eden of the heart,  
Joy hastens to a happy rest,  
And lightly laughs at fortune's frowns,  
For life is bliss when love is blessed.

---

When Duty stands, an angel stern,  
With flaming sword, at Eden's gate,  
And Love from that bright bloom must turn,  
To die amid the thorns of hate,—  
Ah, in that desert of the heart  
In vain are other blessings shed;  
In vain ambition tempts the soul,  
For life is dark when Love is dead."

*Yolande*—(*impatiently*.) Another love song! Pray,  
Sir Troubadour,

Is love alone the only thing in life?

I weary of the sound.

*Prince*— Thou dost scorn love,

O lovely Princess, who art made for love!

Nay, hear me, lady; thou hast never known  
What love is; thou dost know alone a sound  
That wearies thee; but love is not a sound.

It is the sweetest of the sweets of life,

The king of all the passions, whose strong touch  
Can tame ambition to a crouching lion.

The mighty liege of might, and lord of hate,  
Love rules supreme, sole monarch of the world.

It is a tyrant whom no man may brave;

It is a pleader whom no maid may scorn.

It is a flower plucked from Paradise  
To bloom forever in a barren world,  
Its sole memorial of lost Eden joys.  
It is a gift from Heaven itself to man  
To cheer and lighten his dark pilgrimage  
If rightly treasured, to the end of time.  
It hath a magic no magician knows,  
To wrap fair blooms around most barren lives,  
To win a sweetness from the heart of pain,  
To set a sorrow with keen ecstasies,  
To burn the brighter in woe, want or shame,  
And pour its tenderest balms on sorest wounds.  
Its joys are boundless as far-reaching air ;  
Its very woes are sweet ;—the pangs of love  
Grow dear and cherished to the heart they rack.  
Age hath no power o'er its glowing youth,  
To dim its glory or to dull its light.  
All other passions leave us at the grave,  
They cannot bridge its gap,—but love alone,  
The lord of life—the conqueror of death,  
Companions us from time into eternity,  
Immortal as the soul.



*Yolande*—                      What love is like  
I have heard many speak ; but none like thee.  
Can *this* be love?

*Prince*—                      O Princess, ask thy heart !  
Thy woman's heart that cannot be denied  
A woman's right to love.

*Yolande*—(*starting up.*)              Thou scarest me—  
Go, go ! thy glowing speech wakes vague alarms—  
I feel strange stirrings in my breast—go, go !

*Prince*—Nay, bid me not to go, nor struggle thus  
With thy true nature. Rule the roaring sea,  
All that man can, but battle not with love.

*Yolande*—(*proudly.*) Am I a child or fool to change  
so quick,

Adore where I have scorned—and at *thy* hest ?  
Thou growest insolent, Sir Troubadour ;  
To honor thee as pilgrim makes thee bold.  
Go, I dismiss thee.

*Prince*—                      Princess—

*Yolande*—                      Beatrice,  
See thou he goes ; if not of his own will,  
Call thou the guards to put him from the gates.

*Prince*—Sweet lady, hear me !

*Yolande*—(*breaking from him.*)      I have heard too much.

(*Exit Yolande hastily.*)

*Beatrice*—Did I not tell thee right.

*Prince*—      No, by my faith!

For thou didst speak of scorn; this is not scorn,  
Nor proud contempt, nor calm indifference.

Why, I have moved her,—she hath heard to-day  
The first true note of love: her heart hath waked.  
The master hand has touched its trembling strings,  
That soon will swell with glorious harmonies.

*Beatrice*—Prince, this is wildest dreaming. Come  
away!

Now canst thou safely fly.

*Prince*—      My proud, fair love!

O what a noble conquest is thy heart!

*Beatrice*—She is as far from thee as yonder sun.

*Prince*—What is her distance to a love like mine?

*Beatrice*—O fool, art thou in love with ruin, too?

I tell thee, she's no woman—she's a fiend!

Black-hearted as her father,—cruel, hard—

A tigress in her passion. She is fair,

And fierce as fair; she'll clamor for thy blood,

If thou affront her pride. Couldst win her love,  
She is no mate to share a throne with thee.

*Prince—(with surprise.)* Yet did I see thee bend  
fond looks on her.

*Beatrice—(passionately.)* And if I loved her once, I  
hate her now,

Yes, hate her bitterly ! A smooth-tongued cheat !  
A fair face hiding a black heart !

*Prince—* Nay, nay.

She cannot be all this. 'Tis thou art mad.

*Beatrice—(losing control of herself.)*

Yes, I am mad from love and misery !

O Prince, thou pearl of knightly chivalry,  
Scorn not the passion greater than thine own,  
Nor blame the anguish that confesses it !

Leave this cold beauty who disdains thy love,  
And fly with me. Am I not also fair ?

If that my state is lower than thine own,  
My love shall lift me to the height of thine.

Thou dost not need a goddess, but a wife ;  
And wife,—nay, servant—slave—I'll be to thee !

*Prince—*Hush, Lady Beatrice ! I hear thee not.

*Beatrice*—Nay, thou shalt hear me ! I have trampled  
shame

Beneath my feet, and fling myself at thine !

*Prince*—Sweet Lady Beatrice, this sudden craze  
I were no knight to count against thy fame.  
When thou art free of it, blush not to think  
I deemed these ravings from thine own high mind ;  
I know 'twas never Beatrice who spoke.  
But I go yonder to the Princess now,  
To tell my name and rank. (*Exit Prince.*)

*Beatrice*— And I stand here  
Despised—rejected—spite his courtesy.  
Shall I bear this? O fool ! to show my heart,  
Fawn like his dog—O shame ! 'twill drive me wild !  
He'll teach her love—I have prepared the way,  
Blind fool that I have been !—he'll gain her heart,  
And in fond dalliance tell my sorry tale,  
And win sweet laughters for so good a jest.  
Dear saints in Heaven ! I could strangle him !  
And her !—and my own self ! O more than fool !  
O wretched girl !—O bitter, biting shame !  
His words were gentle, but he meant a sting.  
Is my love, then, so light a thing to him ?

There's many a knight, his peer in all but rank,  
Hath striven for it, and he throws me off  
As if I were an over-loving dog!

I am disgraced—my name—my maiden fame  
Are at his mercy—(*suddenly.*) No! he is at mine!  
He scorns my love, then let him feel my hate!

(*She rushes out.*)

(*Enter Prince and Yolande.*)

Yolande—(*with agitation.*) I tell thee, leave me!

Prince— No, thou royal maid,

I did not come in danger and disguise,  
For one sweet, fleeting glimpse of thy fair face.  
I came to lay my love before thy feet,  
And gain the priceless treasure of thine own.

Yolande—(*haughtily.*) Nay, that can never be. A  
prince art thou,

And comest in this guise to woo as bride  
My father's daughter? Dost thou know, Sir Prince  
That life may be the forfeit of thy love?

Prince—My life, sweet Princess, is my lady's right,  
And if thou wilt not love me, take my life!

O fair Yolande, love hath become my life!  
I cannot live without thee,—every thought

And wish and hope, is tribute to my Queen.  
As light is to the blind, so thou to me,  
The passionate desire of all my soul.  
If thou turn not on me thine eyes' clear ray,  
My days are dark forevermore. Yolande,  
My lily white of stainless maidenhood,  
My royal flower, no king upon the earth  
Is fit to wear thy beauty in his crown,  
And yet I crave it. I will be to thee  
Thy loyal lover till the day I die.  
My care shall compass thee with happiness;  
My strong heart be a shield of massive steel  
That woe or pain must pierce to reach thine own.  
O radiant Princess, smile upon my hope!

*Yolande*—Why hast thou come to break my happy  
peace?

Go, Prince, in mercy, go. I fear thy words,  
Thy burning words,—thy vows are sweet to hear,  
But I must trust them not. I cannot love.

*Prince*—Now, by my soul, but thou canst love,  
indeed.

Thy heart is opening to the touch of love  
As flowers to the sun. O perfect flower,

Be mine thy loveliness—thy passion pure  
Pour on my eager heart, for passion great  
Lies prisoned in thee, waiting for release.  
Thyself shalt wonder at the rushing tide  
That will engulf old teachings and old scorn,  
And drown false feelings, in the mighty force  
Of one free instant. Love is lord of time,  
And if it slowly grows or quickly springs  
To sweet perfection, it is still true love.

*Yolande*—Can years' convictions die in one short hour?  
And can an impulse born within that hour,  
Be strong enough to trust my future fate?  
Nay, I'll not trust it. Prince, thy suit is vain.

*Prince*—Look in mine eyes, mine eager eyes, Yolande,  
And say with steady voice and calmest gaze,  
Thou still despisest love. Thou canst not, sweet;  
The drooping lashes of thy starry eyes,  
The rosy blushes of thy perfect cheek,  
Are eloquent against thee. Hushed the melody  
Of thy soft voice, but sweeter to my heart  
Its silence, than the music of the world.  
O mine own love! deny me if thou canst!

(*He throws himself at her feet.*)

---

(*Enter King Ebole and Beatrice.*)

King—By Heaven! 'tis true. Yolande! (*Fiercely.*)

Who art thou, insolent?

Yolande—(*aside and hastily.*) Tell not thy name.

Prince—I am a pilgrim bound from Palestine—

Beatrice—A lie, Sir King!—he is the Prince of Arles.

Yolande—O Beatrice—

King—Hush, girl. (*To Prince.*) Art thou the Prince?

Prince—(*proudly.*) Ay, King, I am the Prince.

King— And in disguise!

A brave device, Sir Prince.

Beatrice— Disguise is fit

For his unprincely and most treacherous plot—

Prince—I cry thee, mercy, Lady Beatrice;

I see thy purpose, but I'll tell thy tale.

King Ebole, I love thy daughter,—nay,

By my dear soul, but I do worship her!

I am thy foe—I came in this disguise

Because I yearned to look upon her face.

I dared thine anger, my own father's wrath,

To tell my love. Untended and unarmed,

With no unknighly stain upon my name,

I face thee now. Do with me as thou wilt.



*King*—Thou art my foe, as thou hast truly said,  
And as a foe I'll deal with thee, Sir Prince.  
I'm deeply in thy debt,—I'll pay my score  
To its last count. This crazy tale of love  
Shall not avail to save thee from my power.

*Prince*—Who asked thee, King, for mercy?

*Yolande*— I! I beg it of thee now.

*King*—Thou plead! Thy spirit should demand his  
death

For his insulting love. I say, he dies.

*Yolande*—O Beatrice, what urged thee to betray the  
Prince?

*Prince*—(*quickly.*) A sense of duty to thine interest.  
Blame not her gratitude to thee, Yolande,  
Mine own deceit invited her distrust.

*King*—Ho, guards, come hither!

*Beatrice*— Better so, than hers!

*Yolande*—O sweet my father, spare him!

*King*— What is this?

*Yolande*—I do not know—but thou *must* pardon him.

*King*—Thou dost not mean this pretty, errant Prince  
Has pleased thy foolish fancy?

*Yolande*— Must he die  
Because he loves me? Thou dost love me, too;  
Sweet father, canst thou blame him? I am fair—  
And silly youth—

*King*— Speak thou of silly youth,  
Thou silly girl? Come, twist me not a coil.  
Didst listen to him?

*Yolande*— I refused to hear  
At first—

*King*—(*testily.*) At first!—what didst thou do at last?

*Yolande*—Dear father, spare him!

*King*— Dost thou love him, then?  
Nay, answer me,—I'm blunt of words, mayhap,  
But I've not lived for nothing fifty years.  
Dost love this man, I say?

*Yolande*— I do not know.  
Strange feelings seize me, clouds confuse my brain,  
Vague yearnings are upon me, life seems changed  
Since this bright morn; my spirit longs for light  
I never missed before. Father, banish him!  
And let me be thy happy child again.

*King*—He dies, I say.

*Yolande*—(*kneeling*) O father, hear my prayer—

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*King*—He dies this moment. Guards!

*Yolande*—(*springing up.*) He shall not die!

*King*—Ha, girl—

*Yolande*— He shall not die, I say!

*King*—His life is mine.

*Yolande*— 'Tis false! his life is mine!

Mine by the love he hath declared to me,—

Mine by the love I here avow to him.

Yes, I do love him! If thou take his life,

Take also mine, that else will be all gloom.

I did not dream that love could seize the heart

With sharp agony as tears me now.

A stranger to me but an hour ago,

He now is more than all the world beside,

Than father, mother, fortune, rank or life.

*King*—Thou are bewitched. Again I say he dies.

*Yolande*—Then mark me, King. If thou dost spill  
his blood,

Upon his body I'll renounce thy own

That flows within my veins. From this day forth,

I'll be no daughter to thee,—I will leave

Thy court, and wander, where I do not care,

So I am far from thee. *There* is my life!

I feel it—know it—he is my sole fate.

Now at thy pleasure, let me live or die !

*King*—Yolande !

*Yolande*—(*clinging to him*). O father, I'm thy  
daughter still !

Forgive my wicked words.

*King*—(*sighing*).

Yolande, my child,

I sought to keep thee free from love and care,

But nature balks me. Still, thou art my child,

And now thy peace hath passed from thine own  
hands,

Thy happiness is yet my wish. Sir Prince,

We have been foes, but I confess thee true

And loyal knight. Her love is set on thee,

So buys thy safety as naught else could do.

See thou dost prize her at her proper worth.

She is the one soft ruler of my will,

And I may not gainsay her, e'en in this.

Let this dear hand I give thee, be a pledge

Of lasting peace betwixt us. (*To Beatrice*.) As for  
thee,

My dangerous lady—

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*Yolande*—                      Father, thou didst give  
Thy royal word to grant my birthday boon.  
I promised it to her,—let her be free.

*Prince*—(*kissing her*). As thou shalt never be—  
sweet thrall of love !



# THE PRINCE'S WOOING.

A Dramatic Poem.

BY  
LOUISE MALLOY.

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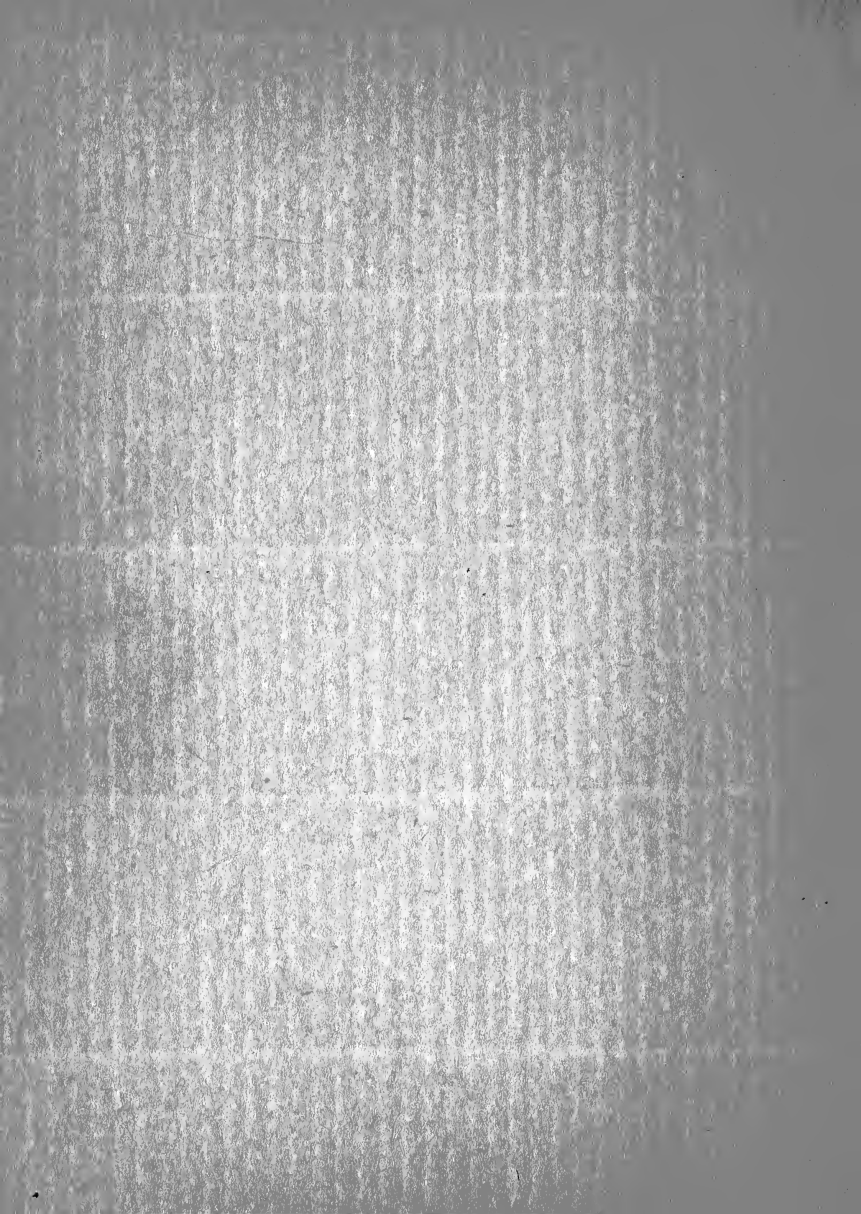
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